

Letter from Alexander Graham Bell to Mabel Hubbard Bell, May 14, 1898, with transcript

Copy of a "Journal for Mabel" in Dr. Bell's handwriting. Evidently a diary of his daily activities written to keep Mrs. Bell posted. Beinn Bhreagh C. B. Saturday, May 14, 1898. At B. B. Hall.

Walked up mountain and down again. Bessie Macrae and Flo Macdougall here again today. Miss Macdougall acting as secretary till Mr. McCurdy turns up. I told Flo yesterday I wanted copies of all letters kept — but as we had not found a letter-press copy-book she made two typewritten copies of letters to Prof. Fay and Mr. Hitz. This morning we found the book and I showed her how to work it — by taking the typewritten copies of yesterday's letters and copying them by pressure in the book. I then tore up the typewritten copies and threw them in the waste-paper basket.

I then asked Miss Macdougall to copy some letters she had written this morning and watched her during process. She copied them successfully in the book — and then tore up the originals! She saw in a moment what she had done and repented when too late. She had to typewrite them all over again — and it will be a long time before she hears the end of this joke upon her.

Telegram received announcing bombardment of Cienfuegos with loss of four hundred Spanish and two Americans. Though how our sailors could tell, on board ship, how many Spaniards were killed on shore is a little uncertain. They probably looked at the Spanish losses through a magnifying glass!

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New joke: — If a bad man should die just now he would be fearfully lonesome unless he could talk Spanish!

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Another: — The Montreal winters have been so cold that a new occupation has arisen. A man has taken to freezing candle-flames, and selling them for strawberries!!

These are some of Mr. Blanchard's latest — the McCurdy blood runs in his veins. Mr. Blanchard came over this afternoon with Douglas and Lucien McCurdy. Later — Lina McCurdy arrived. All stayed to dinner (at 6 P. M.) so we had quite a large dinner party. 10 in all. Mr. and Mrs. A. M. Bell, Bessie Macrae, Flo Macdougall, Mr. Blanchard, Mr. Ellis, Douglas McCurdy, Lucien McCurdy and self. That's nine — one more — oh! yes — Lina.

Wonder whether the Spanish Fleet is really at Martinique — if so a great naval battle must have been fought by this time — and I fear for America's divided squadrone. It is maddening to know that the Halifax papers will not be here till Tuesday morning! I rely upon you for news of the War — and will telegraph you tomorrow for news.

AGB.